

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. ^{PG:} 66-37-3
Magi No.
DOE ___ yes ___ no

Maryland Historic Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Robert and Hazel Watkins
and/or common

2. Location

Street & number 4502 Beechwood Road ___ not for publication
City, town College Park ___ vicinity of 5th Congressional District
State MD County Prince George's

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
___ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing address of all owners)

Name Robert and Jasmine Watkins
Street & number 4504 Beechwood Road Telephone no (301) 927-3410
City, town College Park State & zip code MD 20740

5. Location of Legal Description

Courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Clerk's Office Liber 7282
Street & number Folio 2027
City, town Upper Marlboro State MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

Title N/A
Date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local
Depository for survey records
City, town State

7. Description

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Condition		Check One	Check One	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

This symmetrical two story center hall colonial is well maintained and in good structural condition. The front facing of the house consists of fieldstone, and the remainder of the house is red brick comprised of American bond. The side-gabled roof is made of slate and there are two brick chimneys. One chimney is fully exposed at the north end of the house. The slate walkway leads to a two-step fieldstone entry porch. The four paneled, cross and bible front door has an elaborate door surround, which is flanked by two engaged and fluted Tuscan pilasters with an Ionic superstructure. The entablature consists of a two-fascia architrave, a simple frieze, and a dentil band cornice.

The first floor front facing windows are double-hung sashes comprised of six over six paned glazing with decorative paneled shutters. Each of these windows has a keystone lintel. Wall dormer windows are situated directly above the front facing first floor windows and the center front door. All side and rear facing windows are double-hung sashes comprised of six over six paned glazing. There is one half-fan window on each side of the house at the attic level. Decorative elements include two brass lamps on each side of the front door and four decorated drain spouts (two are functioning).

The front yard is well maintained with tall trees and large bushes, which add privacy to the house. The backyard is fenced, and a long driveway is situated to the south of the house. There is a single story, two-car garage with a deck on top. The garage is in the backyard. At the rear of the house, there is a small gabled porch supported by two piers. The house has a full and finished basement.

In the early 1940s, a one and half story office was added on to the south end of the house. The office has a side slope gabled roof, and a full width, one-story porch with two squared piers. There is an aluminum storm door, and a wood door leading into the office.

The interior of the house is in good condition. On the first floor are a living room, dining room, kitchen, office and half bathroom. (See accompanying floorplan.) Both the living room and dining room have oak hardwood floors. The living room has a chair rail, and a fireplace. The dining room has one built in original cabinet. There is a fireplace in the office, as well as a fireplace in the basement den. There are three bedrooms and two full bathrooms on the second floor. The basement has one bedroom, a den, a full kitchen (original stove/range) and a large utility area. The house is a total of 1,976 square feet.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance – Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology– prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology – historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/ government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates: 1937

Builder/Architect: College Park Bldg. Corp./R. Webster Ross

Check:

Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ DApplicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ GLevel of Significance: ☐ National ☐ State ☒ Local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Watkins house was built in 1937. Robert and Hazel Watkins, the owners of the College Park Homes building company built the house for themselves and the house has always remained in the Watkins family. Robert M. Watkins of Mt. Airy, Maryland, was responsible for development in Calvert Hills during a great deal of the interwar decades. From 1933 to 1935, Watkins supervised construction for the College Park Corporation owned by H. C. Byrd, the former president of the University of Maryland. In 1934, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) established a plan to help develop suburban areas with specific definitions of neighborhood standards. The FHA plan may have been what prompted Watkins along with Omar D. Crothers, a prominent Baltimore attorney, to form the College Park Building Corporation in 1935, which purchased 160 building sites in the Calvert Hills neighborhood. By 1937, the College Park Building Corporation took over the development of Calvert Hills and built forty-one residences.

In 1938, Watkins bought out Crothers and formed College Park Homes with his wife, Hazel Watkins. "Blocks 1 & 2" of Calvert Hills were purchased by College Park Homes, and Watkins began to build homes on what are now Rhode Island Avenue, Calvert, Harvard, and Guilford roads. Watkins obtained building materials from People's Lumber and Supply Company, which his father, Thomas Watkins owned in Mt. Airy. Most of the craftsmen and workers were from Damascus and Mt. Airy. In addition to using plan books, Watkins hired Hyattsville architect R. Webster Ross to design the brick center-hall colonial revival houses on Beechwood Road, as well as some of the houses on Wake Forrest Drive, and Fordham Road. Ross also designed his own house, built by College Park Homes at 7007 Fordham Road, as well as the John Faber House at 6900 Wake Forrest Drive.

College Park Homes dominated the residential development of Calvert Hills. The largest houses are on Beechwood Road with progressively smaller examples starting down the hill. The lower priced houses were often called, "Pot of Gold Houses" because Watkins was selling them for an average price of seven thousand dollars, and College Park Homes often fronted the initial down payment for many university staff buyers.

During World War II, when building slowed down Watkins became a member, and later the chairman, of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. In 1942, he undertook the task of renaming the streets and renumbering the houses in College Park, as well as other areas of Prince George's County, in a systematic way. Watkins' new order was believed to be one of the most progressive moves to develop in the metropolitan area, and it was a development that was inevitable with the rapid expansion of College Park.

Today Robert Watkins, Jr., and his wife Jasmine Watkins reside at 4502 Beechwood Road. The office was added in approximately 1942 to serve the clerical needs of the College Park Homes building company, which originally owner Hazel Watkins managed and Mrs. Jasmine Watkins still manages today. This property not only signifies a dominant architectural form (Colonial Revival) for domestic building nation wide during the first half of the twentieth century, but it is also a part of a more significant whole: the Calvert Hills neighborhood.

Colonial Revivals, type-houses, refers to the rebirth of interest in the early English and Dutch houses of the Atlantic seaboard. Unlike actual eighteenth century colonial houses, twentieth century colonial revivals were built as modern houses using form and detail inspired by colonial precedents that created eclectic mixtures. Colonial revival plans were widely disseminated by photographs in books and periodicals, such as The American Architect and Building News.

502 Beechwood Road is a good example of side-gabled roof colonial revival. Like most of the houses on Beechwood Road it was built in the late 1930s part of the College Park Homes development in Calvert Hills. The center hall plan provides easy circulation throughout the first floor of the house that includes a living room, dining room, kitchen, and a mud room. The office addition, which also contains a half-bathroom, is accessible through the dining room. Unlike 4606 and 4613 Beechwood Road, 4502 it does not have a rear sunroom or bay windows. The other major difference between 4502 and some other colonial revivals in Calvert Hills is that its facade is fieldstone instead of brick and board and batten. The variety in building materials also distinguishes the colonial revivals in Calvert Hills which seemed unique and appealing to potential homeowners. In this case, 4502 Beechwood was built to suit by the builder himself. The house retains most of its original materials and design features.

This house contributes to the entire development of Calvert Hills as a "streetcar" suburb. Beechwood Road is easily accessible to U.S. 1, and aside from the trolley U.S. 1 provides a direct route for automobile traffic into Washington. Most of the houses in Calvert Hills were built with detached garages signifying a growth in automobile use in the late 1930s. This house along with many other College Park Homes in Calvert Hills provided a good bulk of the housing for University of Maryland faculty and staff. Robert Watkins, Sr. was a speech professor at the University of Maryland. Calvert Hills is a cohesive community, which has retained many of its characteristics as an early twentieth century suburb without many dramatic changes.

9. Major Bibliographic References

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Mr. Robert Watkins is the son of builder, Robert M. Watkins, who is the originally owner of College Park Homes. College Park Homes is still a Watkins family business operated by Mrs. Jasmine Watkins.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle Scale _____

Quadrangle Scale _____

UTM References: (do not complete UTM references)

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

State	Code	County	Code
State	Code	County	Code

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title Lisa McCollough

Organization The George Washington University

Date March 28, 1998

Street & Number 2826 28th Street NW

Telephone 202/518-1114

City/Town Washington

State DC 20008

The Maryland Historical Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

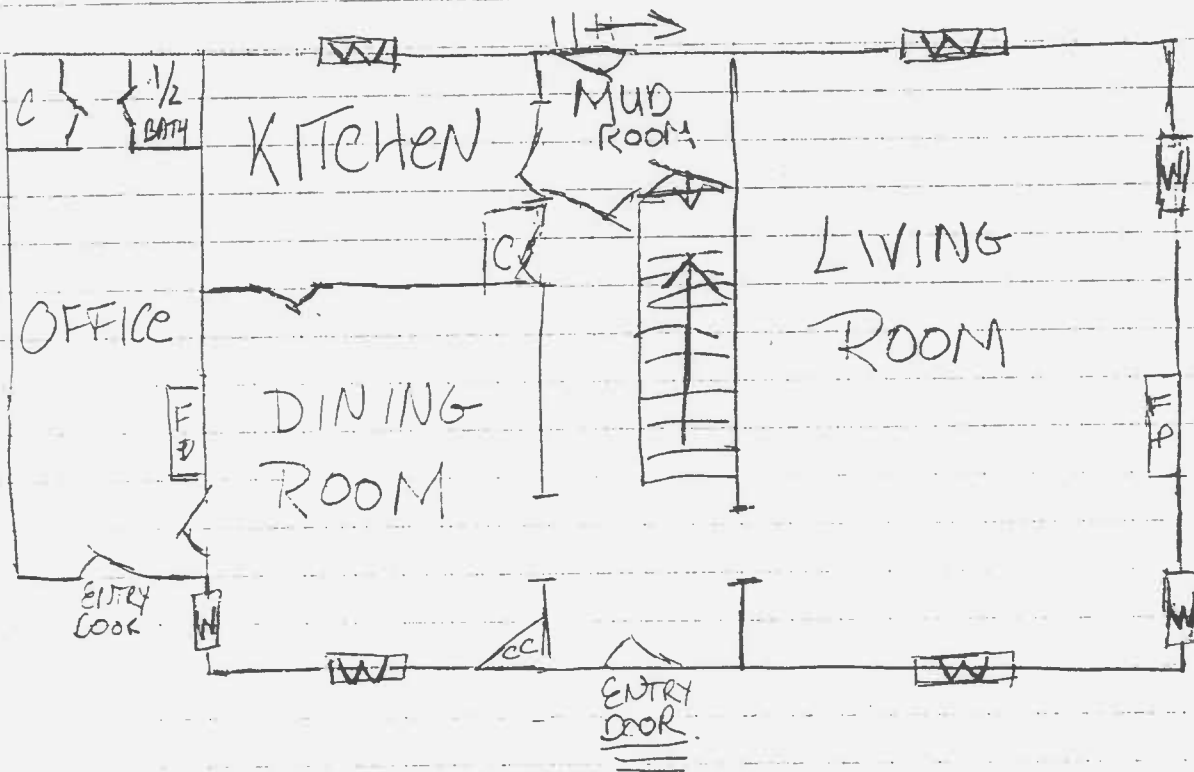
The survey and inventory are prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights

Return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, MD
21401
(301) 269-2438

4502 BEECHWOOD ROAD PG: 66-37-3

FIRST FLOOR

C - closet
FP - FIREPLACE
W - WINDOW
CC - CHINA CABINET
// STAIRCASE



Continuation Sheet:

Survey No.

